

E-Filing Pilot Project Criminal Case Pilot Team Meeting 02/12/2004

E-Filing Project Goal

To enable the electronic filing and automated handling of the King County Superior Court case documents maintained by the Department of Judicial Administration (DJA), the Superior Court Clerk's Office.

Project Background

The King County Superior Court and the Department of Judicial Administration (DJA) have been working toward an integrated Electronic Court Records (ECR) system.

This project began several years ago; several of the major pieces have been completed. The E-Filing project constitutes the final steps in building the ECR system.

The ECR system as it presently exists uses scanning to capture paper documents, storing the electronic images in an electronic document management system. This system allows computer based viewing and printing of documents within the King County Wide Area Network (WAN).

The E-Filing project will expand the ECR system by allowing users throughout the legal community to submit Superior Court case documents electronically. Authorized users will submit case documents using secure Web sites on both the Internet and the King County intranet. Electronic forms and other documents will be filed directly with the Court Clerk without the necessity of having to be printed. Documents that are already in electronic form will be added to case files without having to go through the manual scanning process. In some situations, case documents should be electronically transferrable from other electronic records systems into the Electronic Court Records system without manual intervention.

The system is being built using modern technology and methods. Current standards are being followed for data structures and communication, including the King County Technology and Security standards and standards developed by the Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts.

E-Filing Pilot Definition - Generic

A controlled E-Filing Pilot Project test of the system will be conducted, using select groups of users and appropriate sets of documents for individual pilots. Each pilot will include filing court case documents, and may also include viewing for participants. Each pilot will use live cases in the production environment. DJA will manage this part of the project with only limited assistance from its developer, Sierra Systems.

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E-Filing Criminal Case Pilot Definition

The criminal e-filing pilot project will allow the Seattle Police Department, the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office Drug Unit, the King County Superior Court bench and the King County Office of the Public Defender to electronically file certain documents from VUCSA cases, with the clerk's office from approximately July, 2004 through August, 2004. Documents to be included within the scope of the pilot include: information, order for warrant, case assignment designation forms, orders establishing conditions for release, notices of appearance, motions, trial briefs, and may include judgment and sentences. If practical, other document types may be added during the pilot.

E-Filing Contract Summary

After a competitive bid selection process, King County DJA contracted with Sierra Systems to develop the E-Filing system.

The E-Filing project is divided into overlapping development stages called "Iterations." The project schedule for Sierra is as follows:

Phase/Iteration	Start	End
Iteration 1	July 2003	February 2004
Iteration 2	December 2003	May 2004
Iteration 3	April 2004	August 2004
Pilot	June 2004	August 2004
Warranty	September 2004	February 2005

The project scope is as follows:

- Iteration 1 – Principal elements of the E-Filing Web site functionality are created, enabling:
 - Filing in existing cases
 - Filing for documents without fees
- Iteration 2 – Expanded E-Filing functionality:
 - All functionality needed for the pilot projects will be completed by the end of this iteration
 - Handling of cases initiated via E-Filing
 - Handling of documents associated with fees
 - The ability for 3rd party filers (EFSPs) to submit E-Filed documents via a standards-based interface.
 - Handling of sealed documents and security
 - Special processing handling, including returning documents to the filer

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- Ability to view filing status online and perform other “power user” functions
- Initial integration with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) authentication process for use during the pilot projects

- Iteration 3 – Full E-Filing functionality:
 - Integration with AOC Judicial Information System (JIS) systems
 - Full integration with AOC’s user authentication process: user-managed sign-up, user-managed password
 - Modifications based on learning from each of the pilot groups

E-Filing Pilot Project Schedule

SCHEDULE -- Not all pilots may need all of these activities. Some pilots have completed some of the activities already.

Activity	Start	End
Identify team members	12/03	1/04
Hold initial meeting. Finalize pilot definition.	1/04	2/04
Determine business processes that need to be part of the E-Filing System (corresponding to the Sierra project schedule).	2/04	3/04
Determine additional business processes that occur before E-Filing (e.g., new document preparation procedures needed in order to submit to the e-filing system)	3/04	4/04
Acceptance testing for 2 nd Iteration, including all Pilot functionality (corresponding to Sierra project schedule).	4/04	5/04
Pilot Period (corresponding to Sierra project schedule).	6/04	8/04
Document results & lessons learned for use by other filers (corresponding to Sierra project schedule).	8/04	9/04

E-Filing Pilot Project Parameters

- Choose a document (s) or process or group for the pilot that will limit the volume of filings during the pilot period to a manageable level.
- The pilot process should be applicable to e-filing other documents in the same case type or for e-filing by others who file the same documents, etc.
- We do not need to fix problems with filing in general or make all filing in the pilot area more efficient; the focus is on electronic filing only.
- The E-filing project is constrained by the terms of the contract with Sierra Systems. Requests for changes to the terms of that contract must be based on a strong business case. If a pilot group believes a change is necessary in order to successfully e-file in the area for which they are responsible, a change proposal should be prepared and submitted to the project manager.

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E-Filing Pilot Project Goals

- Identify and develop the simplest and most straightforward approaches, to ensure maximum ease of use for e-filers.
- Show how the E-Filing system improves the efficiency and quality of the court filing process for stakeholders.
- Show how the processes implemented for the pilot can be applied to other filings of the same or similar type.
- Ensure that learning from the pilot is captured, applied, and communicated to others to improve the process prior to opening e-filing up to more filers and document types.

Resources

- The E-Filing Project team is available to be a resource for each pilot group, if needed. The E-Filing Project Manager, Catherine Krause, will evaluate all requests for help from the Project team and make arrangements to meet each group's needs.
- It is anticipated that the pilot groups will be able to go forward with their work and testing activities without requiring the E-Filing Project to obtain additional resources. However, when a pilot group believes that certain new resources are essential to success, the Project Manager will consider the arguments and explore solutions, including meeting such needs with existing or alternative resources.